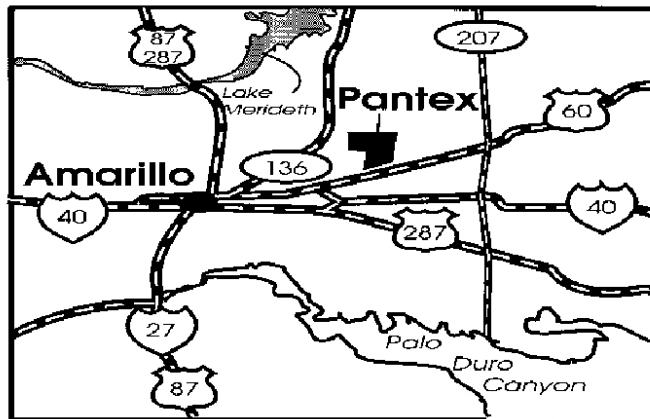


# Pantex Community Relations Plan

## Pantex Plant (USDOE)



**Community Relations Plan**  
**August 2003**



# **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6**

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## **Introduction**

**The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has prepared this Community Involvement Plan (CIP) for the Pantex(DOE) Site. (hereinafter the “Site”), in Amarillo, Texas, to identify issues of community concern and to provide a basis for establishing communication with the community during the Remedial Investigation/ Feasibility Study (RI/FS) and any further activities that may take place at the Site. Technical terms which may be new to the reader are printed in boldface type and are defined in the Superfund Glossary (Appendix A).**

**The CIP consists of four sections:**

**Section 1 - Introduction**

**Section 2 - Site Background and Status**

**Section 3 - Community Involvement Background**

**Section 4 - Community Involvement Program**

**This CIP describes activities required to meet the provisions of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, as amended (CERCLA). This CIP has been developed in accordance with EPA guidance for conducting community involvement programs for Superfund Sites.**

**Personal interviews with residents, community and business leaders, and Federal, state and local officials who are interested in Site activities form the basis for the Site CIP (see Appendix B for the Community Interview Questionnaire). In addition, file research and discussions with technical staff from the EPA and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) contribute background information for the plan. As investigations at the Site regarding the RI/FS progress, the EPA will review and revise the plan to reflect any changing community involvement needs.**

**Congress passed CERCLA, commonly known as Superfund, in 1980 to correct the problems of abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites that threaten public health or the environment. Under the Superfund program, the EPA can pay for investigating and cleaning up problems at hazardous waste sites which are listed on the National Priorities List (NPL) if those responsible can not be found or if they are unwilling or unable to pay. The law also permits the EPA and states to require those responsible for the contamination**

**to investigate and conduct remedial activities at their sites or to reimburse the EPA for**

**doing the work.**

**The law authorizes the EPA to initiate short-term “removal” response actions when there is an imminent and substantial endangerment to human health or the environment.**

**“Remedial” actions are designed to correct problems that present a potential long-term risk to human health or the environment.**

### **Site Background and Description:**

Pantex Plant (hereinafter “the Site”) is located 17 miles Northeast of Amarillo, Carson County, Texas. Approximately 160,000 people reside in Amarillo.

The area surrounding Pantex is primarily agricultural. The facility occupies approximately 16,000 acres with approximately 10,000 of these acres owned by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and 6,000 acres leased from Texas Tech University (TTU). The acreage leased from TTU serves as a buffer zone for site safety and security. Currently, the main mission of the facility is the assembly, disassembly, and maintenance of nuclear weapons; interim plutonium pit storage; and the production of high explosives (HE) components.

36% of Amarillo's water supply is received from a well field 4 miles from the Site.

20 domestic water wells are located within one mile of the site.

The Ogallala Aquifer at Pantex occurs at a depth that ranges from 390 to 480 feet below ground surface.

This aquifer serves as the primary source of domestic and municipal water supplies.

A perched aquifer, averaging about 10 to 30 feet thick, occurs at approximately 270 feet below ground surface.

### **Status of Environmental Investigations**

The TCEQ is currently overseeing investigative work being conducted under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) corrective action program. The EPA is also overseeing investigative work under Superfund authority.

On August 4, 1998, the EPA received a petition from DOE requesting deletion of the Site from the National Priorities List (NPL) based on deferral to the TCEQ's RCRA program and “no further action” for Firing Site 5 (according to the DOE the only site of radiological concern), and other sites contained in fifteen Operable Units. Evaluation of the petition request will be contingent on EPA review and concurrence that no further action is necessary at those sites with potential radiological impacts. Those reviews are concurrent with ongoing reviews of RCRA Facility Investigations (RFI).

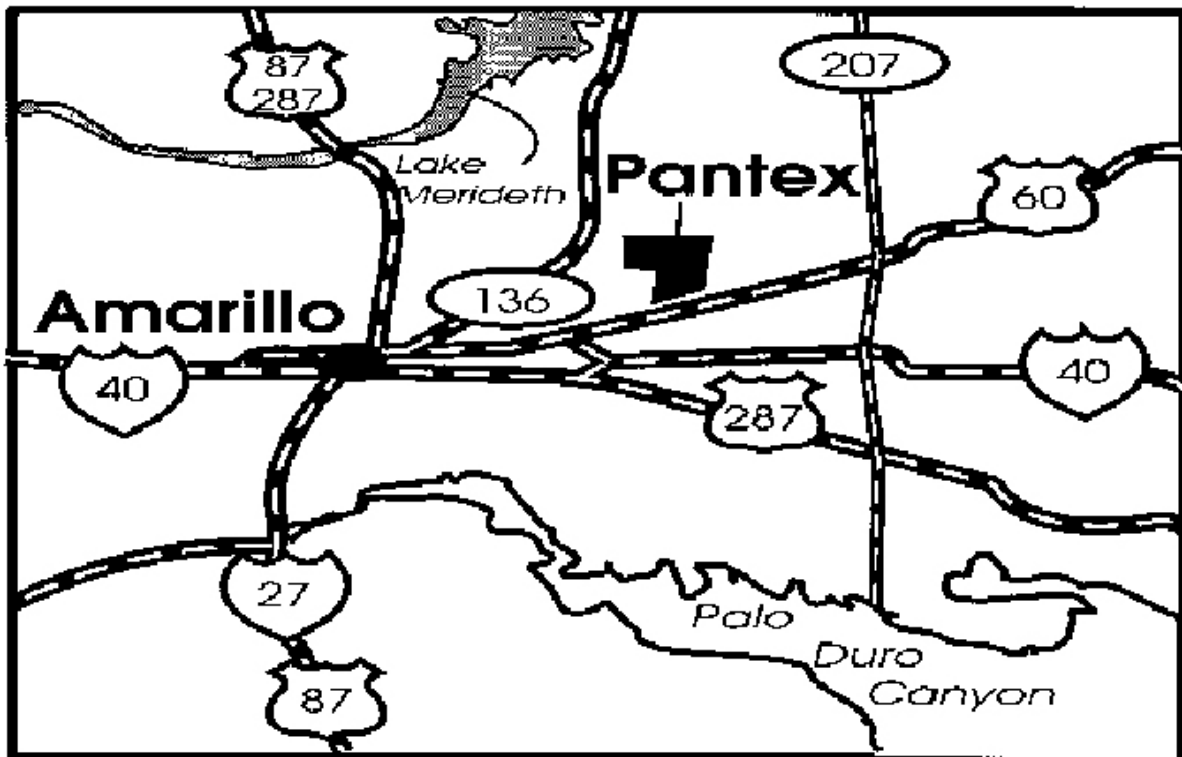
A Soil Gas Survey, combined with a Partitioning Interwell Tracer Test (ITT), identified possible primary and secondary sources for the TCE contamination recently discovered in the Ogallala Aquifer at the Burning Grounds. The solvent evaporation pit, adjacent to Playa 3, was determined to be the primary source for the TCE contamination at this location, while the landfills appear as a secondary source for volatiles, specifically Toluene. As an interim corrective measure, DOE installed a Soil Vapor Extraction (SVE) system at the Burning Grounds to reduce the suspected source area. The SVE system became

operational February 28, 2002, and is expected to minimize further impact to the Ogallala aquifer in this area.

### Status of Removal Activities

There has been no actual removal to date as all most of all the work related to this site is still in the investigation stage.

### SITE MAP



## **Community Involvement Background**

The objectives of EPA's Community Involvement Program are to:

- Increase efforts to identify residents who reside near the Site to ensure that they have opportunities to become involved in the Superfund process.
- Maintain open communications between EPA, and those near the Site, community leaders, business leaders, environmentalists, local, state and federal government agencies and officials, and other interested persons or groups. This communication will be established early in the Superfund process, and will be maintained during the duration of the project.
- Provide residents, agencies, local officials, civic leaders, media, and other interested persons or groups with accurate, timely information about the Superfund process, the progress of the RI/FS, and other crucial technical and administrative matters. This will give community members the tools they need to provide meaningful input into the decision-making process.

## **Community Profile**

### **PANTEX PLANT SITE**

Located in the Texas Panhandle in Carson County, Pantex Plant is approximately 27 km (17 mi) northeast of Amarillo. The Plant site is bounded on the north by Texas Farm-to-Market Road (FM) 293, on the east by FM 2373, and on the west by FM 683. To the south, DOE-owned property on the site extends to within 1.6 km (1 mi) of U.S. Highway 60.

The Pantex Plant industrial operations are conducted for the DOE by a management and operating contractor (BWXT Pantex), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), and Sandia National Laboratory. Seventy-six kilometers (47 mi) of roads exist within the Pantex Plant boundaries. A spur of the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad extends through the leased land into the DOE-owned property on the southwest area of the Plant site.

### **DOE PROPERTY AND LAND USE**

#### **Owned Lands**

DOE owns approximately 9,100 acres at the Pantex Plant. Just over 2,000 acres of the DOE-owned property are used for industrial operations at Pantex Plant excluding the burning

ground, firing sites, and other outlying areas. The burning ground and firing sites occupy approximately 489 acres. Remaining DOE- owned land serves DOE safety and security purposes.

DOE also owns Pantex Lake, a detached piece of property approximately 4 km (2.5 mi) northeast of the main Plant site that comprises 1,077 acres; the playa lake bed itself occupying approximately 800 acres. Currently no government industrial operations are conducted at the Pantex Lake property.

### **Community Issues, Concerns, and Information Needs**

As part of the research for this CIP, EPA staff discussed community issues, concerns and information needs related to the Site with public officials, community leaders, business people, and other members of the community on several site visits.

The following is a list concerns which the members of the community stated in a meeting with EPA officials.

1. The city of Amarillo has three (3) water wells on Pantex property. No one has informed the community as to whether or not these wells are contaminated.  
One of the city wells is close to Pratt lake. Is this a problem as there is also a Pantex monitoring well close by?
2. There were 30 private drinking water wells that Pantex was monitoring ( 5 had filtration systems in place). This summer (2003) Pantex stopped monitoring these wells and stated that they did so in the interest of national security. How is this true? Will they restart monitoring?
3. Three homes adjacent to the north of the Pantex property were bought out and the owner of the homes had to agree to a gag order.
4. Two years ago Pantex asked all site community to sign a wavier allowing Pantex unlimited access to private properties with a “no-fault” clause holding Pantex harmless against any possible damages. The community refused to sign the agreement. Pantex told TCEQ & the EPA that the community was being uncooperative.  
Pantex has a very bad habit of sending its staff on private property and not asking or letting owner know ahead of time. This has happened a number of times. The Community does not believe anything Pantex tells them.
5. Pantex appears (to the Community members) to hold itself “outside of the law”. Example just started reporting their wells data in the last 4/5 years.  
The Ground Water (GW) District gets very spotty reports from Pantex. The GW suspects Pantex is not providing true reports when they do get them.
6. If Pantex contamination comes onto private property will the innocent land owner be

responsible for the cleanup?

7. Handouts at the quarterly Pantex GW meetings are useless because they can't be read.
8. Because of the location of private property, appraisals are way down and the land value of the farms and ranches around Pantex is very poor.
9. The old sewage disposal site had contamination of Chromium has it been adequately cleaned up?
10. Most of the possible contaminated water from Pantex goes into Pratt lake. Pratt lake needs to be tested for contamination due to storm water drainage from Pantex contaminated uranium soil.

### **Community Involvement Program**

Throughout the Superfund process at the Site, EPA will conduct a Community Involvement Program to address the concerns and issues important to community members and foster communication between the Agency and those interested in correcting contamination problems at the Site. The Superfund program will insure that community members have ample opportunity to voice opinions and receive answers to their questions.

### **Community Involvement Activities and Tools**

#### **Fact Sheets**

A minimum of four fact sheets will be prepared during planning for and implementation of the RI/FS. The first several fact sheets will provide information about the history and background of the Site, public involvement opportunities, and the removal action. Another fact sheet will be published at the beginning of the RI/FS to inform the community of field investigations and other Site activities. The stand alone fact sheet and handout will include detailed information about the alternatives EPA evaluated to correct Site Problems. Another fact sheet will address the Proposed Plan, which presents the Agency's preferred remedy. In addition, there will be an announcement about the public comment period and the date, time and location of the public meeting, and offering other opportunities for the public to become involved in the Superfund Process. EPA will also provide a fact sheet that will present details of the selected remedy for the Site and an overview of the Responsiveness Summary. Other fact sheets can be produced as needed to meet the information needs of community members. Fact sheets will contain clear, accurate descriptions of technical information prepared in a style



and format that will encourage use and understanding. They will be filed at the information repositories, distributed to people on mailing list, and made available at workshops, open houses, public meetings, and other events.

### **Media Information**

EPA will issue news releases that provide important information about the Site to the newspapers and radio and television stations that serve the area. News releases will be prepared to announce the beginning of the public comment period for the Proposed Plan and as needed during the course of the project.

### **Open Houses**

EPA will hold open houses periodically to provide residents, civic leaders, public officials, environmental groups, news reporters, and others with current information about Site activities and the Superfund program. Open houses will include a project update from EPA, TCEQ, and TDH staff and a question and answer period.

### **Visual Aids/Graphics**

Visual aids including drawings, slides, posters, videotapes, and overhead slides that illustrate remedial technologies, explain the Superfund process, or provide details about Site-specific activities will be used to illustrate fact sheets and other informational material and to support open houses and public meetings. Effective use of graphics and visual aids can help enhance community understanding of the Superfund program and the remedial process at the Site.

### **Mailing List**

Throughout the project, EPA will continue to maintain a mailing list for distributing information to the community. The mailing list will include residents who live near the Site, community groups, environmental organizations, businesses, representatives from the news media, and local, state and federal officials. EPA will update and expand the list as the project continues.

## **Community Relations Interview Questionnaire**

### **Community Interview Questions Pantex Site**

Interviewee

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you knowledgeable about past operations at the Site? Do you have information about any past activities that EPA might find helpful?
2. To the best of your knowledge, has the individual or group responsible for this situation done anything to clean up the Site?
3. Are you aware of contamination problems at the Site? What concerns do you have about the Site? Do you have any specific concerns about Site contamination?
4. Do you know other community members who may have concerns about the Site? Can you recommend others who might be interested in talking to us about the Site? Can you suggest another person or group EPA should interview about the Pantex Site?
5. Recently, what issues have attracted the most attention in the community? Are there current environmental issues that are of interest to community members?
6. Are there organized environmental groups active in the community?

7.What is the best way to keep residents informed about cleanup activities at the Site?

8.Would you like to be included on the mailing list?

9.Do you have any additional questions or comments about the Site?

### **Key Contact List**

Mr. John Q. Ward, City Manager  
City of Amarillo  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo, TX 79105  
(806) 378-3000

Mr. Alan M. Taylor, Assistant City Manager  
City of Amarillo  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo, TX 79107  
(806) 378-3000

Mr. Trent Sisemore, Mayor  
City of Amarillo  
P.O. Box 1971  
Amarillo, TX 79107  
(806) 378- 3000

Judge Lewis Powers  
Carson County Judge  
Panhandle, TX  
(806) 537- 3622

Mr. Rod Schroder, Supt.  
Amarillo Independent School District  
7200 I-40 West  
Amarillo, TX 79107

(806) 354- 4200  
[rod.schroder@amaisd.org](mailto:rod.schroder@amaisd.org)

Ms. Camille Hueni, Remedial Project Manager  
EPA Region 6  
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Mr. Duke Ducote, Community Involvement Coordinator/SEE  
EPA Region 6  
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[ducote.duke@epa.gov](mailto:ducote.duke@epa.gov)

Dennis Huddelson, Manager  
Environmental Remediation  
Services Department  
PantexBWXT  
(806) 477- 6508

Robert Musick, Project Manager  
Remediation Division  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg. D  
Austin, TX 78711  
(512) 239- 2243

Richard P. Lee  
Air/Pantex Project Section Manager  
TCEQ  
3918 Canyon Drive  
Amarillo, Tx 79109  
(806) 468- 0530

Mr. David Swinford  
State Representative  
724 S. Polk, Ste 760  
Amarillo, TX 79107

Mr. John Smithee  
State Representative  
320 S. Polk, Ste 10  
Amarillo, TX 79107

Mr. Teel Bivins  
State Senator  
418 S. Polk  
Amarillo, TX 79107

STAND  
Pam Allison  
P.O. Box 30939  
Amarillo, Tx 79120

Peace Farm  
Mavis Belisle, Director  
188 Hwy  
Panhandle, Tx 79068

PANAL  
Doris Smith  
Box 20  
Panhandle, Tx 79068

#### **Schools Located Near the Site**

There are no schools within a 1 mile radius of the site,

### **Superfund Glossary**

**Administrative Order on Consent (AOC):** A legal agreement signed by EPA and an individual, business or other entity through which the violator agrees to pay for correction of violations, take the required corrective or cleanup actions or refrain from an activity. It describes the actions to be taken, may be subject to a comment period, applies to civil actions and can be enforced in court.

**Community Involvement Plan (CIP):** A document developed from community interviews and EPA guidelines that outlines Agency efforts to establish communication with the public. The CIP is designed to create understanding of EPA programs and related actions, to assure public input into the decision-making process in an affected community, and to make certain that the Agency is aware of and responsive to public concerns. Specific community involvement activities are required during Superfund RI/FS actions.

**Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA):** Also called Superfund, a Federal law passed in 1980 and amended in 1986 by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act. CERCLA is codified at 42 U.S.C. § 9601, *et seq.* Under the program, the EPA can either:

- Perform site cleanup when parties responsible for the contamination can not be located or are unwilling or unable to perform the work; or
- Take legal action to force parties responsible for site contamination to clean up the site or pay back the Federal government for the cost of the cleanup.

**Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC):** The EPA or State official responsible for overseeing and directing public involvement activities for a site.

**Hazardous Ranking System (HRS):** A model used to evaluate potential risks to public health and the environment from releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances.

**Information Repository:** A file containing current information, technical reports, and reference documents regarding a Superfund Site. The information repository is usually in a public building that is convenient for local residents, such as a public school, city hall, or library.

**National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP):** The Federal regulation that provides a blueprint for Superfund program operations. It regulates response actions under CERCLA to address releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. The NCP is codified at 40 CFR Part 300.

**National Priorities List (NPL):** EPA's list of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites identified for possible long-term remedial response using money from the Trust Fund. The NPL can be found at 40 CFR Part 300, Appendix B. The NPL list is based on the score a site receives from the Hazard Ranking System (HRS). The EPA updates the list at least once a year.

**RCRA:** Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (1976, 1984) regulates management and disposal of hazardous materials and waste currently generated, treated, stored, disposal of or distributed.

**Preliminary Assessment:** The initial stage of site assessment under Superfund. It is the process of collecting and reviewing available information about a known or suspected waste site or release. It is designed to distinguish between sites that pose little or no threat to human health and the environment and sites that require further investigation.

**Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS):** The RI/FS involves the investigation and study of any release or threat of release of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants from a site.

**Remedial Project Manager (RPM):** The EPA or state official responsible for overseeing on-site remedial action.

**Responsiveness Summary:** A summary, prepared by the EPA, of the written and oral comments made by the public on the RI/FS report and Proposed Plan and the Agency's responses to those comments.

**Site Inspection:** The second stage of site assessment under Superfund. It expands upon the data collected during the Preliminary Assessment and identifies data gaps. This inspection is the collection of information from a Superfund Site to determine the extent and severity of hazards posed by the site. The purpose is to gather information necessary

to score the site, using the Hazard Ranking System, and to determine if it presents an immediate threat requiring prompt removal actions.

**Superfund:** The common name used for the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act.

## **Appendix E**

### **Schedule of Superfund Activities**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
Contacts with Community Members	Ongoing
Public Comment Period	
Public Meeting	
Responsiveness Summary	
Update Information Repositories	As Needed
Open Houses	
Visual Aids/Graphics	As Needed for fact sheets, open houses
Update Mailing List	Ongoing
Advertisements	Open houses, Public Meetings, as needed



